Sausalito Public Library Board of Trustees Special Meeting June 6, 2013 at 2:00pm at EOC Meeting Room

Minutes

Board of Trustees in attendance: Myra Berkowitz, John Walsham, Patricia DeLuca, Don Means, Elizabeth Terplan

Also in attendance: Dale Barnes, Abbot Chambers, Jim Delano, Bob Gould, Karen Gould, Amy Novesky, Jerry Rampelberg, Tom Theodores, Augie Webb, Libby Wilkinson

John Walsham called the meeting to order at 2:02 with a three minute break for public comments. There were no public comments.

Strategic session with Joan Frye Williams, Library Futurist

Joan is a librarian and watcher of trends (joan@jfwilliams.com). She evaluates ideas from industries outside of libraries and imports them. This presentation is a conversation about next steps rather than a how-to guide.

The Next Chapter: Thinking Strategically about the Future of the Sausalito Library

Feel good about the renovation success and the commitment to planning for the future. Be able to balance short term and long term goals and be open to new options. Topic suggestions from attendees included changes in the methods of reading, space needs, demographic changes, library as a social place and volunteer management. Goal is to put these ideas out and then process them.

Changing context

There are environmental changes that are having an effect on libraries, especially with regard to technology. Change is not happening any faster than it did in the past, just the methods are different.

Diversification of reading

Pew Charitable Trusts studies (http://www.pewtrusts.org/) are a credible source for evaluating patrons and the ereader experience. The divide is not between technology and non-technology users but between readers and non-readers. It's a matter of preference of form, not content. Technology is not the "death of print books," it's just another option for patrons.

Impact on young readers. According to a study by the Human Factors Laboratory (http://www.uwf.edu/spbs/hf-lab/), kids will make a beeline for technology but they will also use print. There are also passion-driven arguments about the appropriateness of co-reading and ereading for young children.

Ideally, the library should commit to a plan to have a collection that is 10% ebooks over the next five years and 30% by the year 2020. Currently the MARINet ebook collection is 1% system wide. There are limitations to making the recommended adjustments including a consortium-based budget (currently 3%), unfair purchasing or leasing models by major publishers, expensive or unavailable popular titles, and legal concerns for the long-term.

Trends. Libraries and authors are applying pressure to major publishers to improve their current business model for libraries. Other models are being considered such as the early adoption by MARINet of Califa's Enki ebook platform (http://www.thedigitalshift.com/2013/05/ebooks/califa-launches-enki-a-lending-platform-for-direct-ebook-distribution/). Growing subject categories for ebooks include textbooks, multimedia for children and current fiction. Space planning opportunities for enhanced patron experience will be possible with the reduced need for shelving.

Ambient information

The library is no longer a precious warehouse for expensive and rare information. Patrons now have free and flowing information on their phones. Libraries are no longer the information economy but the facilitators of patron experience. Librarians curate and create a selective flow tailored to individuals.

Consumer-driven innovation

Innovation at the community level has altered the expectations of patrons. Opinion has shifted from "it's cool that the library has that" to "why doesn't the library have that?" Libraries don't have to chase every trend but should be attentive and in line with the service models available in their specific community. Patrons want choice and staff needs to be ready to converse in a variety of interfaces. Staff can improve their skills by taking courses through InfoPeople (http://www.infopeople.org/), networking with their peers and self-educating on the latest trends. The future will be smart phone driven.

Access, not ownership

There has been a shift from the accumulation of physical resources to the expectation of online access. Libraries will need to seek alternative fundraising strategies to selling used books. Digital Rights Management (DRM: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital rights management) will become an important skill set for librarians in the near future as libraries invest more in online resources. Decisions about license vs. purchase of digital materials are currently made at the consortium level through MARINet. The California State Library has ambitious five year plan to improve patron's access to online information: http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/docs/LSTA5YearPlan2013-2017.pdf

Non-textual content

More content is available online that is not text based or text driven. Graphic content like graphs, images, data sets and 3D manipulation are on the rise. Libraries need to be more flexible in accommodating these alternative formats for patrons who prefer them. Libraries can also be instrumental in supporting long term educational goals by diversifying content options.

Group Exercise: What would a library without books look like in 2020?

Group 1: Librarians would evaluate and curate information for patrons as well as guide and educate patrons in accessing information. The library would be a place to do homework, support a literate community, be attractive, provide quiet seating areas and retain the "living room" experience, be a destination that would reflect the uniqueness of the area (the boating community, for example) and preferably have a view of the water.

Group 2: The library should be attractive both physically and online and appeal to a variety of users. The space should be flexible to accommodate events, meetings, book groups and other community gatherings.

Group 3: The library could become more like a laboratory for patron discovery. The space would need to be flexible and address acoustical changes. Teen space could include more engaging devices such as a 3D printer. Other ideas included a rooftop garden for meditation and underground parking for patron convenience.

Summary conclusions: The Library has to "be better than home." We have to discard the notion that the library is "what we do." Our product is not just our materials, programs and services but our patrons' experience which happens independently of our control. We need to be able to create occasions for positive experience and be able to get out of the way. Our message should be that we are neutral, supportive, educational, and that all are welcome. We need to leverage these ideas to create a stronger community and loyal patron base.

Changing expectations

What does good service look like for our demographic? Libraries can't rely on stereotypes of age as predictors for service (such as teens only being interested in graphic novels and going to the mall). Only language and ability are consistently accurate predictors for subject terms.

Hospitality

The library should adopt a hospitality model that is in alignment with what a patron can expect within the community. There should be sensitivity for age and ethnicity issues. Patrons have other options besides the library to get information or gather. The stereotype of libraries as places of rules and rudeness should be replaced with space and time consideration for different experiences and patron acknowledgement.

Convenience

Patrons need to feel that the library is a convenient service. What does that look like for our patrons or patrons we would like to attract? Librarians will need to anticipate patron needs and create premediated experiences—replacing the time-consuming reference interview. Examples of library ideas included not isolating teens away from the entrance, creating to-go book bags for patrons, weekend and evening hours, after hours pick-up, e-services, stroller parking and circular story hour for busy moms and nannies.

Simplicity

The idea of simplicity is a different experience for different patrons. Ideas included having a library card on a phone or cashless services.

Accessibility

The library should provide the best possible experience both online and in the library. Staff should provide outreach and point services to where they are needed in the community. The library should adopt a fairness model that is flexible for the needs of individual patrons not "one size fits all." An example is extending bestseller checkout times for slower readers.

Novelty

Libraries need to appear alive and vibrant and not "stuck in the past." Ideas for keeping the library interesting for patrons can be a simple as rotating collections to establishing the library as a tourist attraction. It is recommended to annually change 20% of the library's collections, services or space configurations. The goal is to use ingenuity not just money make the library competitive as a

destination—"library meets museum meets theme park." Some of the examples included an aquarium exhibit, themed libraries, allowing services to flow outside with better security gates, WiFi for outside spaces, creature comforts such as coffee and reading gardens. Tulsa Library has a sunken patio, art installations, movies and unique children's programming.

Strategic opportunities

Libraries have the opportunity to align their outreach efforts with services already provided in the community. Bring what libraries do well to the people.

Embedded services

Creative ideas for outreach included "Ferry Tales" in Seattle (storytelling and book discussion for ferry commuters), a "read at the beach" and library card drive in Newport Beach, busking lines for other community events to promote library programs and services, and enlisting volunteer bloggers to cover library events.

Hosted services

Provide patrons with a "one-stop shopping" experience by allowing other vendors such as the post office to set up mini stations in the library or training staff to navigate online government forms.

New approaches to learning

How are libraries supporting the educational needs of patrons? Are we accommodating changing styles and formats? Ideas for programming included providing online courses for Nooks and sponsoring a remote lecture site using a "flipped classroom" model (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flip_teaching). There is a changing relationship between educational institutions and libraries. Libraries have an opportunity to support the quality of local schools.

Library as laboratory

Currently there is a lot of interest in maker spaces (http://makerspace.com/home-page) with grants available for novel projects. Patrons enjoy hands-on learning. Libraries have shifted from "being the grocery store to the kitchen," a place where patrons can discover and manipulate information in nonverbal forms. There are opportunities for collaboration with groups such as the Exploratorium where libraries can provide a more intimate and scalable experience for patrons.

Brain insurance

Libraries naturally support the interests of the health care industry and neuroplasticity for all ages. Libraries need to take a developmental approach to programming and outreach for both young children and older adults. There is an opportunity to collaborate with HMOs for shared interests in educating the public about children's health, vitamins, prescriptions, senior wellness, etc. There are also grants available for programming as one additional year of independence saves the health care industry \$120K.

Support for job seekers and entrepreneurs

Libraries need to provide more interactive environments for patrons, not just materials. Ideas included matchmaking patrons with others in the community who have been successful with a particular outcome, creating spaces for groups or individuals to meet and collaborate, have theme-oriented events where patrons can discuss shared goals, provide extended computer time, coffee and convenient open hours/event times.

Collaborative storytelling

What is our library story? What does the community value about us? Libraries need to find more engaging ways of defining ourselves to the public as patrons "crave narrative over materials." Example given of an Instagram (http://blog.instagram.com/) project where patrons took pictures of things they liked in the library and discussed them online. Staff can learn a lot by this kind of feedback. The Delft Library project defined their community story through digitized oral histories.

Hyperlocality

The Library should reflect the community. What works in Sausalito? Look to the "quirks" that make the community unique and leverage that to draw in patrons. Examples of service included providing driving software for patrons getting a license and Skype sessions to Europe for tourists in Massachusetts.

Element of surprise

Create a moment of whimsy for patrons. Example given was the "Bibliomat," a machine that dispenses random books to patrons with a coin.

Final thoughts

- **Envisioning:** Don't start with a to-do list, it's not a list of projects.
- Niches: Where can we make a difference? What difference do we want to make?
- Outcome: Aim for success at the patron experience level.
- Audience: Be mindful of the difference between supporters and user s of the library. There are residents who vote in support of the library who will never get a library card, they consider the library a "pre-paid service."
- Assets: Evaluate, manage, supplement, augment and leverage
- **Partners:** The library is not a charity. We need to align ourselves with community members with comparable ideals and agendas.
- Initiatives: This is the time for the to-do list. Be open and flexible with your plan—as long as you agree on a general direction, you can more easily take advantage of as yet unknown opportunities as they occur.

Meeting adjourned by John Walsham at 5:11. Motion by Elizabeth Terplan, seconded by Myra Berkowitz.

Minutes submitted by Augie Webb.